

Message Text

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TAGS: NATO, PFOR, NAC, AWACS

SUBJECT: ALLIED REACTIONS TO GEORGE WILSON'S
WASHINGTON POST STORY

REF: USNATO 1500, DTG 161840Z MAR 77

1. THIS MESSAGE REPLIES TO YOUR REQUEST IN PARA 3 OF
REFERENCE FOR APPROPRIATE COMMENT FOR TRANSMITTAL TO
PERMREPS ON WILSON STORY.
2. IN ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT YOU MAY
WISH TO REMIND PERMREPS THAT GEORGE WILSON'S STORY OF
COURSE EXPRESSES HIS OWN VIEWS, AND THAT HE IS NOT A
SPOKESMAN FOR THE US GOVERNMENT. YOU MAY, AS APPROPRIATE,
DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING VIEWS EXPRESSED BY SECRETARY BROWN
AT CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS.

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3. APPEARING BEFORE THE DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE WHICH WAS REVIEWING THE
FY 78 DEFENSE BUDGET SUBMITTED BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINI-
STRATION, SECRETARY BROWN CITED SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL
TRENDS OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO THE DEFENSE BUDGET
AND US CAPABILITIES. HE STATED THAT THE MILITARY

CAPABILITIES OF THE SOVIET UNION HAVE BEEN EXPANDING BOTH ABSOLUTELY AND RELATIVE TO THE POWER OF THE US, AND THAT THE NATIONS OF WESTERN EUROPE LACK ANYTHING LIKE THE MILITARY CAPABILITIES THEY WOULD NEED TO COUNTERBALANCE THE POWER OF THE SOVIET UNION BY THEMSELVES. HE THEN STATED THAT, AS A CONSEQUENCE, US MILITARY POWER WAS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN SOME DEGREE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE, ORDER AND STABILITY; HOWEVER, THE BASIC ISSUE IS NOT WHETHER THE US SHOULD HAVE AMPLE MILITARY POWER -- WE MUST ASSURE THAT WE DO -- BUT HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH.

4. IN HIS STATEMENT TO THE CONGRESS ON THE AMENDMENTS TO THE FY 1978 BUDGET AND ON THE FY 1979 AUTHORIZATION REQUEST, SECRETARY BROWN MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS CONCERNING SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND THE MILITARY BALANCE:

THE STRATEGIC NUCLEAR BALANCE.

A. THE SOVIETS HAVE UNQUESTIONABLY IMPROVED THEIR CAPABILITIES WITH INCREASED THROW-WEIGHT IN THEIR ICBM'S, THE DEPLOYMENT OF MIRV'S, SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS IN MISSILE ACCURACIES, AND MORE DEVOTION OF EFFORT TO THE PHYSICAL ELEMENTS OF A CIVIL DEFENSE PROGRAM. HOWEVER, WE ARE SURE THAT US STRATEGIC FORCES COULD SURVIVE A WELL-EXECUTED SOVIET SURPRISE ATTACK IN SUFFICIENT NUMBERS TO STRIKE BACK WITH DEVASTATING POWER AGAINST THE APPROPRIATE SOVIET TARGET SYSTEM. THESE CAPABILITIES, COMBINED WITH THE SIZE, DIVERSITY, AND SOPHISTICATION OF THE US STRATEGIC FORCES, DO NOT SUPPORT THE BELIEF THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OUR NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES FALL SHORT OF EQUIVALENCE WITH THOSE OF THE SOVIET UNION.

B. WE WOULD PREFER TO SEE THE PRESENT STABILITY MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED THROUGH EQUITABLE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS AND AT LOWER FORCE LEVELS. BUT WITH OR WITHOUT SUCH AGREEMENTS, THE BALANCE CAN BE MAINTAINED IN THE FUTURE WITHOUT EXCESSIVE EFFORT ON OUR PART, PROVIDING THAT WE SIZE, SELECT AND MODERNIZE OUR FORCES ADEQUATELY. WE ARE NOW SPENDING NO MORE THAN ONE PERCENT OF THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT ON STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES. WHILE I DO NOT FORESEE SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER PROPORTIONATE EXPENDITURES ON THESE FORCES IN THE NEAR FUTURE, IT SHOULD BE QUITE EVIDENT THAT WE CAN--AND WILL--DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO KEEP A STABLE STRATEGIC BALANCE IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

THE BALANCE IN EUROPE

C. THE STATE OF THE MILITARY BALANCE IN EUROPE IS MORE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT TO ASSESS. THE NATO COMBINATION OF CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR FORCES STILL REPRESENTS A POWERFUL DETERRENT. BUT THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN EXPANDING AND IMPROVING THEIR PERIPHERAL OR THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES, AND HAVE NOW BEGUN THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE MIRVED SS-20 MOVABLE, INTERMEDIATE-RANGE MISSILE. DURING THE LAST FOUR YEARS, THEY HAVE ALSO ADDED MANPOWER TO THEIR GROUND FORCES IN EASTERN EUROPE, PROVIDED THESE UNITS WITH MORE MODERN EQUIPMENT, AND INTRODUCED AIRCRAFT INTO THEIR FRONTAL AVIATION THAT MAY BE COMPARABLE IN PERFORMANCE TO OUR LATER-MODEL F-4S. THESE IMPROVEMENTS WOULD GIVE THEM AN INCREASED CAPABILITY FOR SUDDEN, OFFENSIVE ACTION IN A CRISIS, AND WOULD PROVIDE A SOLID FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO BUILD IN THE EVENT OF A MAJOR MOBILIZATION BY THE WARSAW PACT.

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D. SOVIET DEVELOPMENTS CALL FOR SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN NATO'S NON-NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES. IN VIEW OF PAST EXPERIENCE, THIS MAY APPEAR AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK. BUT BOTH IN PRINCIPLE AND IN PRACTICE, IT SHOULD BE ENTIRELY FEASIBLE. NATO IS NOT AT A MAJOR DISADVANTAGE IN DEFENSE MANPOWER RELATIVE TO THE WARSAW PACT; IT PROBABLY INVESTS ABOUT AS MUCH IN DEFENSE, IN ABSOLUTE TERMS, AS THE PACT DOES. IN CERTAIN RESPECTS SUCH AS TACTICAL AIRCRAFT, ANTITANK WEAPONS, AND MORE MODERN MUNITIONS, IT STILL RETAINS SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES OVER THE BEST OF THE SOVIET FORCES. BUT THESE COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES ARE WANING, AND THE CONVENTIONAL BALANCE IN EUROPE -- WHILE NOT BADLY TILTED AGAINST NATO -- IS MORE PRECARIOUS THAN IT SHOULD BE. WHILE THE PACT CANNOT BE CONFIDENT OF BREAKING THROUGH NATO'S FORWARD DEFENSES, NATO CANNOT BE CONFIDENT OF PREVENTING A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH.

E. WE AND OUR ALLIES NEED TO DO MORE TO MAKE THE ODDS LESS UNFAVORABLE AND TO MINIMIZE THE RISKS OF INTIMIDATION IN A CRISIS. HOWEVER, OUR PROBLEMS SEEM TO BE LESS A SHORTAGE OF FORCES THAN THEY ARE SUCH REMEDIABLE WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT FORCES AS MALDEPLOYMENT, INADEQUATE READINESS, TOO FEW ARTILLERY TUBES, AND INSUFFICIENT LONG-RANGE, WIDE-BODIED AIRCRAFT MODIFIED TO HANDLE OVERSIZED CARGOES. TO THE EXTENT THAT MORE DIVISIONS AND AIR WINGS MIGHT BE NEEDED FOR THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE IN THE FUTURE, IT IS BY NO MEANS EVIDENT THAT IT WOULD BE MOST EFFICIENT OR POLITICALLY DESIRABLE FOR THEM TO BE PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES. BUT BETTER COORDINATION

BETWEEN US AND ALLIED FORCES IS ESSENTIAL, ACROSS THE

FULL SPECTRUM OF TACTICS, DOCTRINE, EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTICS.

5. AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY PRESIDENT CARTER TO THE FY 1978 DEFENSE BUDGET REFLECT A STRONG US COMMITMENT TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IMPROVING THE COMBAT READINESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR GENERAL PURPOSE FORCES AND TO ENHANCING OUR ABILITY RAPIDLY TO REINFORCE NATO FORCES. IN THAT CONNECTION, PRESIDENT CARTER PROPOSED ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES TOTALLING APPROXIMATELY \$600 MILLION TO IMPROVE EQUIPMENT READINESS; INCREASE PREPOSITIONED STOCKS IN EUROPE; AND ACCELERATE THE AIRCRAFT SHELTER CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM IN EUROPE, THE CIVIL RESERVE AIR FLEET MODERNIZATION, AND OTHER URGENT CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS. THE NET EFFECT OF THESE PROPOSED BUDGET AMENDMENTS WOULD BE TO STRENGTHEN US MILITARY CAPABILITIES TO RESPOND RAPIDLY AND EFFECTIVELY IN THE EVENT NATO WERE THREATENED.

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